

UDC

Sibanda-Thusi N. M.

**NELSON MANDELA INTERNATIONAL DAY
18 JULY 2018¹**

The Nelson Mandela International Day was launched on 18 July 2009. This was followed by the adoption of a United Nations General Assembly resolution on 10 November 2009, declaring the birthday of the late President Nelson Rolihlahla Mandela (more affectionally known as Madiba) as Nelson Mandela International Day.

President Mandela served as the first President of the democratic South Africa from 1994 to 1999. He dedicated 67 years of his life to the struggle to create a better South Africa and fighting against discrimination, through which he became a symbol of the struggle to end racism, sexism and all forms of human degradation.

Every year on 18 July the international community honour the late President Mandela. The overarching objective of Nelson Mandela International Day is to inspire individuals to take action to help change the world for the better, and in doing so build a global movement for good. It seeks to empower communities everywhere to “Take Action; Inspire Change; Make Every Day a Mandela Day”.

In 2018, Nelson Mandela International Day is even more significant because it is also a Centenary of the late President Mandela. The current President of the Republic of South Africa, His Excellency Mr Cyril Matamela Ramaphosa has declared that 2018, South Africa and all South African Mission abroad will observe the Centenary of Nelson Mandela.

In honour of the life and legacy of the late President Mandela, the South African Embassy in Moscow has planned various activities in response to the call made by President Mandela in 2009, when he said “it is in your hands now”:

On the occasion of the Nelson Mandela International Day, the South African Embassy, in partnership with the United Nations Information Centre in Moscow and Masterslavl will organise a charity event for the children from several charitable organisations such as All-Russian Society for the Deaf, Foundation “Be Together” for insulin-dependent Children, “Children for Russia” centre for children with oncological diseases and “Marias’s Children” for children from orphanages.

The event will be followed by a reception to be hosted by the South African Embassy in partnership with Lotte Hotels & Resorts in Moscow. The reception will be utilised to raise awareness and expand the reach of the late President Mandela’s values, i.e. fighting injustice, helping people in need and practicing reconciliation. No matter how small the action, the aim is to change the world for the better, just as Madiba did, every day.

The actual day (Nelson Mandela International Day, 18 July) will be preceded by number of activities by the South African Embassy in Moscow in partnership with Aspen Health LCC dedicated to benefit Lubertsi children’s home and

Ivanteyevka Orphanage. This is in line with Madiba's love for children. To this end the Embassy in partnership with Aspen Health LCC will clean the territory, plant flowers, conduct master classes and paint the buildings.

The South African Honorary Consul in Vladivostok, in partnership with Aspen Health LCC and the Far Eastern and Regional State Social rehabilitation centre for children "Parus Nadezhdi" will dedicate the day to give support children from socially vulnerable families, including children who suffer from family violence and those who face permanent danger in their lives.

Madiba loved and prioritised children and the most disadvantaged society as he did everything possible to improve their quality of life. It is thus with immense pride that we, together with the rest of humanity embrace Madiba's values and honour his legacy through humanitarian acts and initiatives that acknowledge his quest to change the world for the better.

In Madiba's memory, let us once more dedicate ourselves to unity, love, forgiveness, reconciliation, respect for one another and tolerance. More importantly, let us recommit to eliminate all social ills from our communities such as the abuse of women and children, the abuse of drugs and other substances, crime and hooliganism, including acts of disobedience, disrespect and destruction of property, as well as the violence that usually accompanies these kinds of actions.

In unity, let us take forward Madiba's vision of ending poverty, inequality and unemployment and build a more prosperous society in which all, especially the poor and the working class, are assured a better life.

To this end Her Excellency Ms Nomasonto Maria Sibanda-Thusi, Ambassador Plenipotentiary and Extraordinary of the Republic of South Africa to the Russian Federation, calls on everyone to devote 67 minutes of their time on 18 July, and every day thereafter, to give back to fellow human beings by actively helping to change their circumstances as Madiba dedicated 67 years of his life making the world a better place. We're asking you for 67 minutes in honour of Madiba's legacy.

Author

Sibanda-Thusi Nomasonto Maria — Ambassador Plenipotentiary and Extraordinary of the Republic of South Africa to the Russian Federation.